

Columbia Park and Recreation's State-of-the-Art Skateboard and Roller Hockey Rink

The Columbia Parks and Recreation Department will open a state-of-the-art skateboard and roller hockey rink in June of 1999. The facility is located near the north end of the Columbia Cosmopolitan Recreational Area and will be open for use from 7 a.m. until sundown.

The Skateboard Park is approximately 120 feet wide, 140 feet long and is constructed of concrete. The design is described as an elaborate street course that incorporates many popular features including: transitions, flat ramps, spine ramps, pyramids, curbs, coping and grind rails. The park design was developed by the parks and recreation staff working with the Skate Park Design Committee comprising area skateboarders.

The Roller Hockey Rink is being constructed adjacent to the skateboard



facility and will offer participants a chance to skate on a full-size rink that is specifically designed for the sport of roller hockey. Its surface will be

constructed of a material which is designed for the roller blade use and the rink will be bordered with hockey dasher boards. This facility will be open for pickup skating and is expected to become a programmed facility as leagues develop.

Steve Saitta, park planner, has spent the last two years working on this project. Steve recalls, "Just over two years ago the city council was asked to consider the development of a skate park in our community. They gave the request their attention and after weighing the benefits of the proposal, decided to support the project. The parks and recreation department was given the task of working with the supporters to locate a possible site and begin development planning. This design challenge became one of the most unique, exciting and rewarding experiences the Parks Planning and Development Division has undertaken."

It all began as an outcry from the



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downtown business community for the city to deal with the skateboarding problem in Columbia's downtown and it lead to a vocal appeal to the city to provide a place for this group of young people to practice their sport.

To be successful in the development of this project we had to address two difficult challenges. The first was the selection of a site that could offer all the features needed to satisfy the skaters and the many others who had strong feelings about where a facility like this should or should not be located. The second challenge was the design process itself. If we failed to provide a facility that maintained interest and challenge for the skaters, the result would be a failure in the eyes of the community and everyone involved would suffer.

This selection of a site was relatively painless and as various areas

around the city were discussed, evaluated and eliminated, it came down to one location that seemed to make sense to almost everyone. The chosen site is located in our largest and most heavily used park, the Columbia Cosmopolitan Recreation Area. The park is home to many local youth and adult sports activities and is one of the principal locations for the annual "Show-Me Games" events.



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